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1919 St. Henry Avenue
10

Photo: Heather Fritz

Cover: Atmosphere Interior Design shares some of their layering design secrets. Story begins pg. 19. Photo: Elaine Mark-D&M Images

HOME Front



Photo: Heather Fritz

When Jack Frost playfully nips at our noses and then gets serious and freezes exposed skin in mere minutes, we are reminded we live in a province with distinct seasons! There are so many things to enjoy about winter, and in this issue, we're happy to share with you a few innovative ways to do it.

The Laycock family in Saskatoon lives for curling. And with a little nod from Wullie MacCrimmon, they can enjoy their favourite sport in their own backyard. Avoid that pile of snow gear and hockey equipment at your front door by following a few tips to make the best use of your space. Dean Thiessen and his buddies can't wait until they can ice fish on Blackstrap Lake. See how one thing led to another as they transformed the simple utilitarian fishing shack into a man cave complete with a TV.

Seasonal transformations are also an obsession for Saskatoon author Anthony Bidulka, who is a self-described Christmas-tree-oholic. Enjoy his jaw-dropping holiday décor, and feel free to borrow a few of the theme party ideas. And nothing says cozy like some mid-winter holiday baking. Join our resident foodie Craig Silliphant who visits who better than Ma Silliphant for the low-down on his favourite treats: butter tarts and sugar cookies.

While you're spending time indoors, give some thought to design layering

techniques brought to you by our friends Curtis Elmy and Trevor Ciona at Atmosphere Interior Design.

We're a happy family here at Saskatoon HOME, and are so proud of our collection of writers, designers, photographers, reader panel members and all the wonderful people of Saskatoon who share their homes and stories with us each issue.

If the joy of what we do isn't reward enough, we are thrilled to announce we have been presented with the **2014 Magazine of the Year Saskatchewan Award** from the Western Magazine Awards Foundation! We are incredibly thankful to our advertisers and readers who make us look forward to constructing each issue. We know there are so many great stories to be told in Saskatoon and we're happy to be part of it right here at HOME. And we're just getting warmed up!

Happy reading!

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How the Reader Panel Works

#1

The publisher sends each panel member a number of story ideas.

#2

Each panel member rates the ideas from most interesting to least interesting.

#3

The answers from all six panel members are cross referenced.

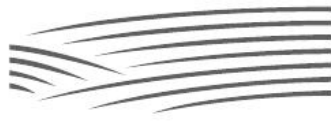
#4

The highest rated stories are selected, and our writers and photographers are then assigned to bring those stories to life.

#5

For each issue, a new panel of 6 volunteers is selected.

Interested in being on a future panel? Email: amanda@saskatoon-home.ca with 'Reader Panel' in the subject line.



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1919 ST. HENRY AVENUE

The Pendygrasse House



Looming above the newer houses around it, built when the street it sits on was just a prairie trail, the tall house at 1919 St. Henry Avenue, with its distinctive tower and widow's walk, is more than a century old. Its history is bound up with

On Dec. 12, 1892 Sarah Pendygrasse from Ireland was awarded a dominion land grant patent for the quarter section of land locals now refer to as the Exhibition area. Above is the home built by Sarah's son Harold in 1909.

that of one of early Saskatoon's oldest families, and one of its most tragic tales.

Saskatoon was only a few years old when the Pendygrasse brothers—Harold, Sefton and Neville—arrived, coming from Ireland. Their



1950's

Photo: Courtesy Obert Friggstad

 **JEFF O'BRIEN**

Photo: Heather Fritz

widowed mother, Sarah, was to come later with their sister. But tragedy struck just weeks before she arrived, when Neville fell from the ferry and drowned in the river. He was buried in the Nutana Pioneer Cemetery which lies along

what is now St. Henry Avenue. In 1892, his mother homesteaded the quarter section just north of the cemetery in what is now the Exhibition area of Saskatoon. Her log house on the corner of St. Henry and Isabella would have been ➤

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Photo: Courtesy Obert Friggstad



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just a short walk down the trail from where her son still lies.

Sarah Pendygrasse eventually returned to Ireland, where she died in 1909. Harold took over the homestead, selling off much of the land (subse-

quently surveyed and marketed as the Bellevue subdivision) and building himself a fancy, new 2 ½ storey house just up the block from his mother's old log cabin. But he didn't stay long. In 1914, the family

moved out to a farm near Pike Lake, and the house at 1919 St. Henry became home to a succession of residents.

The neighbourhood filled in very slowly. Maps and aerial photographs from the 1920s to

the 1950s show little change, with only a scattering of buildings on the other side of the CN railway tracks (where the Idylwyld Freeway is now) in what was once Sarah Pendygrasse's homestead, north of

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Over the years the renovations completed have unveiled different rooflines altering the exterior look to the home.

Photo: Heather Fritz

Ruth Street and west of Lorne Avenue. There were commercial greenhouses and market gardens along the north side of Ruth Street where Exhibition Park and Trident Crescent are today, and substantial garden plots all throughout the area. It is perhaps because of this isolation that the family who lived in the house in the 1940s had a pet bear—something you didn't see in Saskatoon very often, even in those days—and that there was a chicken coop in the back yard into the 1950s. Around that time, the house was divided into main and second floor suites, and a new staircase addition was built to provide access to the upper storey. Finally, in 1972, it was purchased by the Friggstads.

Obert Friggstad, a young architect, and his wife Connie, had been house-hunting for almost a year when they ➤



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Family room located on the third (attic) level.



Living room on the ground level.



Kitchen located on the ground level.

Photos: Heather Fritz

saw the advertisement for the house on St. Henry. Connie was busy that night, so Obert went out to look at it on his own. He purchased it on the spot, secure in the belief that his wife would agree it

was exactly what they were looking for. Fortunately for him, she did.

At first they lived in the main floor suite and rented out the upstairs. But the idea was always to take it back to

a single-family dwelling, a process which took them nearly a decade. During that time, they turned the previously-unfinished attic into a family room, removed the second floor suite and modernized

the interior. Outside, they restored the widow's walk, built a deck and re-finished the exterior. A dining room and basement addition were added in the 1990s, and in 2000 the rooflines above the ➤



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Inspired by their grandchildren, Obert and Connie Friggstad stand beside a play house in their back yard that was built in 2001. It is a scale replica of the old house, complete with widow's walk & architectural detailing to match the original.



Photo: Heather Fritz

Obert shows off the view from the still accessible widow's walk on the top of the home.



Photo: Heather Fritz

St. Henry Avenue and surroundings in 1950.




Photo: Saskatoon Public Library – Local History Room – LH 9416

1950s staircase were corrected. At every stage, attention was paid to the heritage aspects of the exterior, and consequently

it received the Saskatchewan Architectural Heritage Society 2001 and the City of Saskatoon Heritage Award 2002.

Today, the Friggstads have been in the house for more than 40 years, by far the longest of any residents. It

was their first house, and if Connie has anything to say about it, it will be their last. 

Jeff O'Brien

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LAYERING YOUR DESIGN

Focusing Your Budget

When it comes to protecting ourselves against the elements, both for fashion and for comfort, layering is a trick we prairie people know well. But maybe we're not so familiar with the technique when it

comes to home design and décor. But when it's done well with structure, lighting, colours, textures and patterns, we can create cozy and elegant living spaces, save money and extend the longevity of each

room while doing it.

Dynamic design duo, Curtis Elmy and Trevor Ciona, are owners and principal designers of Atmosphere Interior Design. The two have become a force in the industry, renowned for

creating glamorous yet casual elegance, with bold patterns and rich textures all layered to perfection.

Curtis and Trevor took Saskatoon HOME through one of their most recent ➤



projects, the show home for the Hospital Home Lottery built by Valentino Homes. They went into detail on a few spaces including the den/office, powder room, dining room and the living room.

They shared some advice about prioritizing elements on a budget, and offered a few tricks for creating a whole environment that's considered, not chaotic.

First the Bones

"When we walk through a house before anything is in it, we want to almost be somewhat underwhelmed. You want there to be a sense that there is still work to be

done in the decorating," says Curtis. "When the bones are good, you have freedom to mix, match, add more layers, some colour and textures."

"We like classic details, symmetry and balance ➤

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Embrace pattern. This can offer great impact in a space, whether it's a chair or wallpaper.

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Different sources of lighting are an inexpensive way to create mood.

Contrasting shapes create interest for the eye.



and the use of architectural details like mouldings and trim," adds Trevor. "Consider the ceiling, too, not just the floor and four walls. Take all the plains of the space into consideration."

Then the Focal Points

"You can have one main focal point, but you also need to have a couple other stars of the show for balance," Curtis explains. Other elements need to carry that dramatic effect.

"Decorating can be relatively easy and inexpensive to change out, but some main elements like the fireplace, for example, use solid marble slabs on the front and ➤

Good storage consideration means less clutter, and more room for thoughtful selection of decorative pieces.





sides. This is a very spendy item in this room," Curtis says. "We look at this and say we don't want to touch this for the next ten years or more, whereas we might be changing our furniture in ten years or less."

The Power of Layering


"I think people underestimate the power of layering with the pillows, the books, putting the proper artwork on your walls, adding the lamps, paying attention to detail and scale," says Curtis. ➤



Small special spaces; treat them like a little jewelry box for your guests. Dress it up. Be bold.



Think about the room and the goal. You can do a lot with a small budget, but don't let a sale be your only reason for picking up that red chair. If something doesn't feel right, if pieces fight with each other, remove something and try again. Remember your features, those focal points and pull textures and colours from them. Done right, that room won't feel like it needs to be touched for a long time.

"I think pulling all the elements together is something we do really well. When people walk into a space and love it, they can't really pinpoint one thing. But the whole feeling is something they love. It's all in the details." 

Karin Melberg Schwier

CURTIS AND TREVOR'S LAYERING LIST:

Where to Invest Bigger Money

Quality bones, invest in good structure when you're building or adding on.

A dramatic focal point, a fireplace or staircase.

Multiple sources of lighting: task lighting, overhead pot lights, ambient lighting with lamps.

Living room sofa, quality, keep it neutral, understated, more classic.

Chairs, comfortable and constructed well.

Great fabric, splurge on durability and quality.

If you're an art lover, get a good piece.

Wallpaper can be pricey, but one wall, or one room adds dramatic effect.

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JULIE BARNES

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THE DIY CURLING RINK

Hurrying Hard in the Backyard

Natal and David Laycock met at the curling rink in 2000. Thirteen years later, the couple brought some of that nostalgia to their own backyard. With a home rink, they now share their love of the game with daughters Lily and Veronica, their friends and extended family.

It was an idea Natal had been brewing for awhile. A set of granite curling rocks can cost thousands of dollars, so Natal planned to improvise by stockpiling coffee containers to use as a substitute. She intended to add concrete for weight and rebar for the handles, but seemed to never

get around to it.

The impetus to finally build their backyard rink came when Persephone Theatre wrapped up last year's production of *The Black Bonspiel of Wullie MacCrimmon* by W.O. Mitchell. Natal's parents are lifetime Persephone members and they asked about the fate of

the rocks used in the play. It turned out they were just destined for storage. Instead of languishing in a closet, the rocks were presented to Natal and David as a Christmas present last year.

"It forced our hand," says Natal. "We said, 'Well now we actually have to do ➤"

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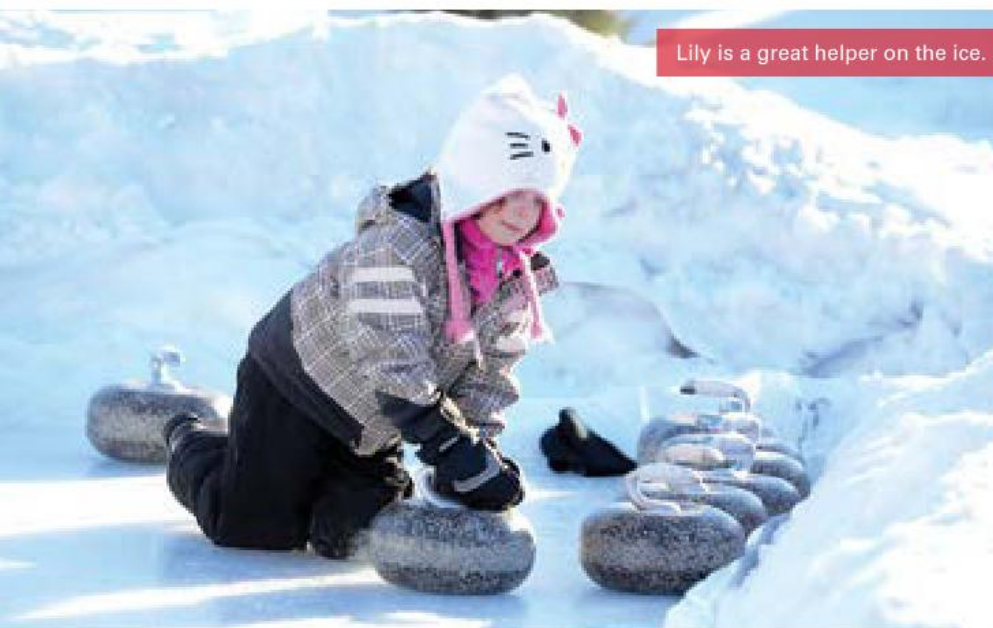
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This backyard curling rink measures 45' long and 10' wide.



Lily is a great helper on the ice.

A lucky score. These curling rocks were used as props in a Persephone play before they were gifted to the Laycocks.



Vacation Plans?

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this.' So between Christmas and New Year's, when it was bitterly cold, David was out there flooding and painting." The result is an impressive rink (also known as a curling rink) measuring about 45' long and 10' wide.

How to DIY

The labour of love began with clearing the yard. Luckily their lawn was relatively flat. "We cleared about 50' in the backyard," says Natal. They left snow banks along the rink's perimeter to envelop the water. "I got some poly and we laid it down. Then, David would

flood it with a garden hose attached to the kitchen sink because the outside line was shut off. We would just do layer upon layer and once it was thick enough David started painting."

At a typical curling rink, both ends of the sheet have a target consisting of a centre circle (called the button) with three concentric rings. This target is referred to as the house. The Laycocks drilled a screw into the ice to mark the centre of the button, and began scratching circles into the surface where the rings would be painted.

Their rink has one ➤

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house, a centre line (running lengthwise down the centre of the sheet), a tee line (intersecting the centre line through the middle of the house, dividing it into quarters) and a back line directly behind the house. If the rock completely passes this line, it's removed from play. All this was painstakingly painted. Afterwards, the rink was flooded again to seal and protect the painted surface.

Curling Basics

While many Saskatonian's are avid or at least educated followers of some level of curling (many of which take the phone off the hook and put their lives on hold while there are Briar games to watch), these basic rules are merely a refresher.

When a curler slides the rock (an act called throwing), it has to at least touch the outer ring

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of the house at the other end in order to score. The rings act as a visual target for the thrower, and help to judge which team's rock is closest to the button. When throwing the rock, players push themselves off from a device known as the hack.

Each team has eight rocks, which they take turns throwing. The rocks slide over a pebbled surface, which is where the curling brooms come into play. Once the rock is thrown, two sweepers use their curling brooms to alter the ice surface in order to influence the distance and direction of the rock. The friction created by sweeping briefly melts the surface, and the thin layer of water allows the rock to glide further. Once all 16 rocks have been thrown, the score is calculated based on which teams' rocks are resting closest to the button. ➤

This rink is home to many spirited ends of curling.



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When the ice maker at their curling club heard about the Laycocks' DIY rink, he offered them a pebbling can that helps produce the granulated surface, and some old curling brooms. David got creative and built the hack out of a piece of two-by-four and an old flip flop.

Challenges

"David's biggest challenge would have been the weather,"


says Natal. "When it gets really cold it's hard to flood and it's hard to paint. It needs to be cold for the ice to set, but when it was -30° and he's taking his mitts off to paint rings, it's slow going and the paint starts to freeze."

Fluctuating temperatures make for extra maintenance. "We had a few freezes and thaws, which caused the paint to bubble and the surface to get really bumpy," says Natal. "For a backyard skating rink

that's less important but when you want to curl you don't want a mogul in the middle of the ice."

The Laycocks enjoyed their rink from the end of December until March last year. Natal's busy schedule included coaching a curling team in the Saskatchewan Winter Games, which took her away from her home rink quite a bit. Now that they know the building basics and own all the neces-

sary equipment, they plan on getting an earlier start this year.

Asked whether she'd recommend other curlers build their own rinks, Natal laughs and offers, "Only if you *really* love curling. It's a lot of work. It's not a make-in-a-weekend and use right away type of thing. You have to put a lot of time in it before you can get a chance to use it." 

Julie Barnes

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LUXURY ICE FISHING SHACK

A Winter Home Away from Home

It's not that they're afraid of roughing it. They just don't think you have to suffer when you're hunched over a hole in the ice in the middle of a Saskatchewan winter, waiting for that elusive perch to latch onto your hook. Dean Thiessen and pals Dave Whitehead, Brian Agnew and Shawn Siba pooled their collective talents to create

a cozy show home to include in the ice hut shantytown that pops up on Lake Blackstrap every winter.

Dean, part owner of the four-season Sunterra Ridge development in Shields, 30 minutes south of Saskatoon, began dreaming big about three winters ago. Having grown up with more utilitarian ice huts,

he began investigating the ice fishing culture that exists in Ontario, Quebec and northern Minnesota where huts are more elaborate. After a Jamaican holiday when a lot of ideas were scribbled on cocktail napkins, Dean and Dave got serious.

"It kind of snowballed," Dean explains. "A guy would contribute this or that idea,

and we started feeding off each other." Reminiscent of eight-year-old kids building a fort, the fishing buddies kept adding features as the enthusiasm grew (see sidebar).

The 8X8 structure included a metal lined bump-out that houses the wood-burning stove, a clever placement that keeps the rest of the area ➤



more open. The *raison d'être*—the holes in the carpeted floor which open over the fishing holes—are covered with plastic covers that snap in and out, an innovation that has prevented the loss of wallets, keys and cellphones. Dean's father learned about shutting the lid the hard way; his new reel, tossed onto the card table, skittered off and disappeared with a plop. But because the hut is outfitted with a fish camera, Dean's brother located the reel on the bottom, put a big spoon on a line and retrieved it.

There was one notion, however, that didn't fly.

"When someone suggested putting a urinal in, we were,

like, no, that's not happening," says Dean. "This is way too small a space. That got vetoed real quick," he laughs. They did agree on using spray foam insulation in the walls and roof, which means the shack is cozy even on very cold days. "The first few times we used it, it was all about the hut and having a good time. After a few times with no fish, it became all about breaking the curse."

The buddies came across an old-timer last winter who seemed to be catching more fish than anyone else. With some delicate persuasion, he was willing to share a few tricks.

"We gave him a few drinks



and he started talking. He took us under his wing. He told us how fish like structure, the topography on the bottom. You've got to find what they like. That's where our fish camera comes in handy."

Dean thinks winter fishing is harder than on open water. If you're not having luck, you can zip around in a boat and cover a wide area pretty quickly. On a frozen lake, a hut on skids is movable with a truck or skidoo, but it's a big job. So being comfortable in the right spot for a long period of time is the key. For guys like Dean

and his pals, that comfortable part is paramount.

But apparently fish aren't overly captivated by wall sconces, knotty pine wood paneling or even satellite TV. Neither is at least one old fisherman.

"The old guy liked our hut. He was sort of impressed, but I think he figured it was over-kill," Dean grins. "His hut was a little self-made tarp thing. We were way more comfortable, but he definitely caught more fish than we did." 📺

Karin Melberg Schwier

THIS SHACKS ESSENTIALS

Wood burning stove

Retractable flush mount coat hooks

Ice hole pressure-fit catch covers

Removable card table

100 cfm fan

Light dimmers

Wall sconces

Knotty pine interior paneling

Elk antler rod holders

Satellite TV

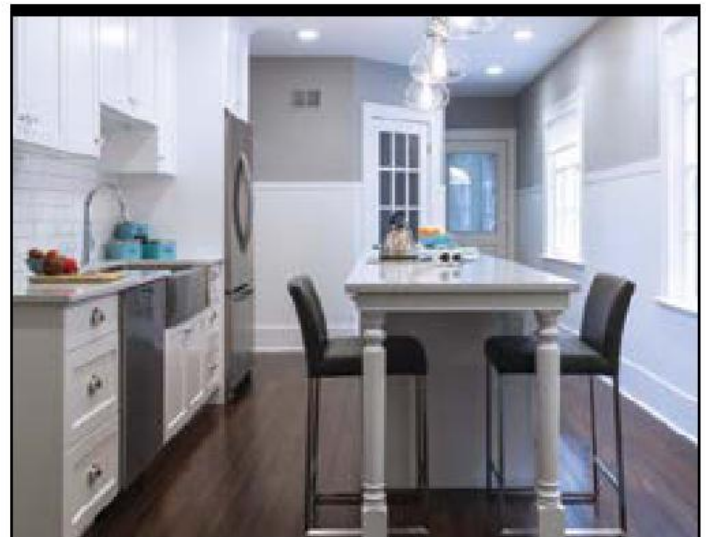
Suitcase style 1000 watt generator (unless the fishing gets serious)

Fish camera

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Good food and drink

And, of course, catching fish—But it doesn't hurt to be able to watch the Super Bowl while you do it.



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COUNTERTOP TRENDS

The Rise of Quartz



The term 'waterfall' is used when the countertop material is extended over and around the top edge, right down to the floor, as seen on this kitchen island. This kitchen features a honed silver travertine full height backsplash, with Silestone quartz countertops.

 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

Photo: Conscious Studio

Granite countertops have long been used as a high end and durable material for countertops in kitchens and bathrooms. The stone is quarried from the earth, and later cut into individual slabs to fit your particular needs,

providing a naturally durable surface.

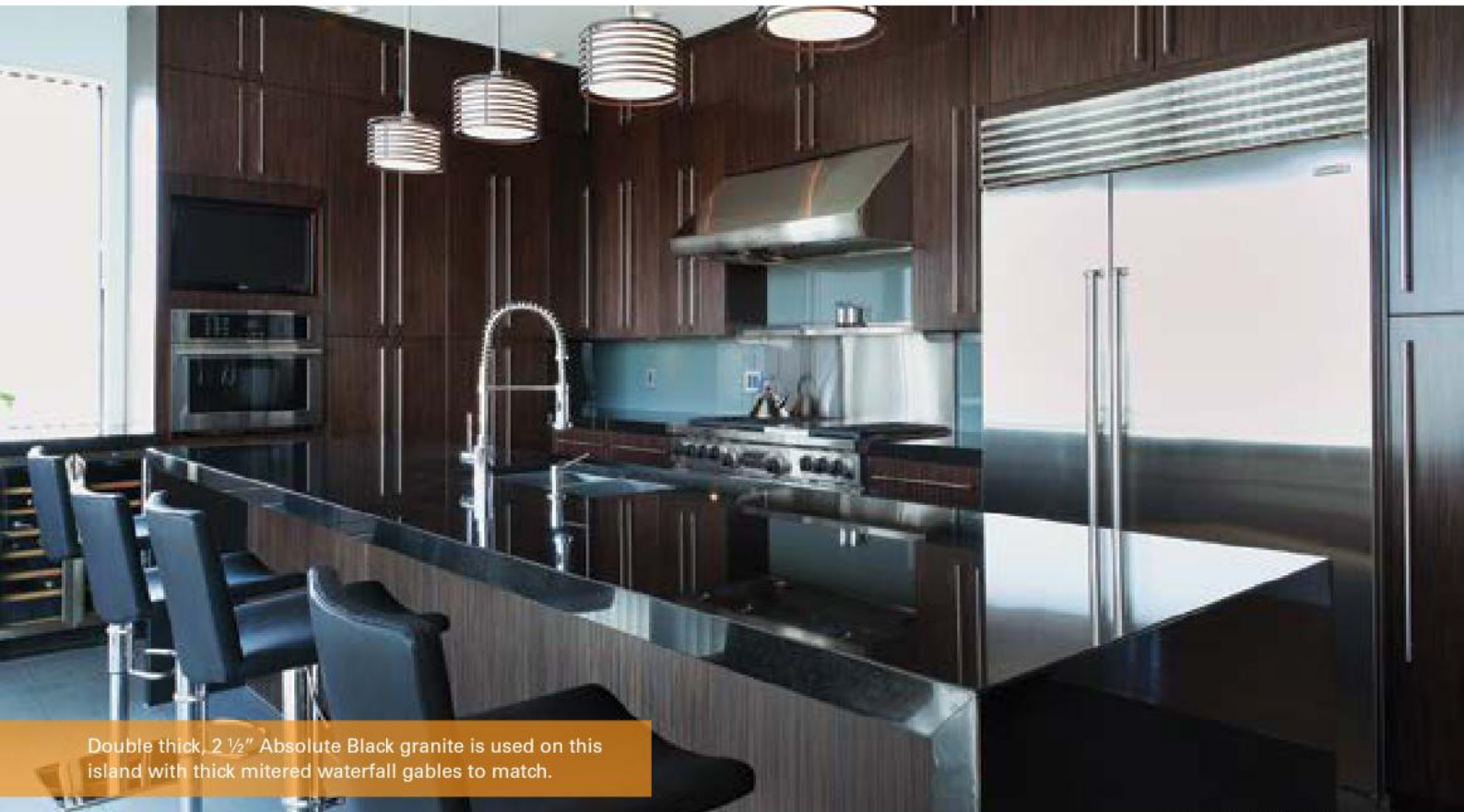
Recently, though, quartz has edged into granite's market share, pushing the natural stone out of its favoured spot. Quartz countertops are manufactured from a mix of

crushed quartz stone and resin, creating a low-maintenance surface that's easier to work with in the installation process, and easier to maintain for the home owner.

As a naturally porous rock, the down side to granite is that

it requires a seal, seams can be more difficult to match and the material lacks the consistency of quartz.

"A big draw [to quartz] is the colour consistency," says Pat Martin, office and sales manager with Pristine ➤



Double thick, 2 1/2" Absolute Black granite is used on this island with thick mitered waterfall gables to match.

Photo: Elaine Mark-D&M Images

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Countertops. A designer can choose a sample of quartz and feel confident about the finished look, while with granite, they'll have to see the full slab to actually find out what it's going to look like.

At one time, entry-level granite was less expensive than quartz, but with the building boom in Saskatchewan, more companies have moved into the market, driving down the price of quartz.

For years, Pristine Countertops sold significantly more granite than quartz. In recent months, it has been just the opposite, with quartz outselling granite.

Quartz companies are also getting better at mimicking natural stone, said Martin.

"Marble is always a popular look, but not a practical product. So many the designers are leaning towards the quartz because you can achieve the look of marble, without all the issues."

The Perfect Palette

White marble's colouring is timeless. Add some warm streaks of greys or golds and there's a richness in any setting, whether traditional, modern,

or somewhere in between.

While not inexpensive, marble is still a popular choice for countertops, but for most home owners, this beautiful material is not durable enough to be practical, says Martin. "It will stain, it will scratch, it will etch."

Quartz imitates marble well. People love the look of white with veining, and the colour is so popular, Pristine often sells out of their in-stock white quartz. Martin even has white quartz in his own home.

Other popular colours right now include grey, and grey-brown. Neutrals that will stand the test of time no matter what trends and renovations roll through your house.

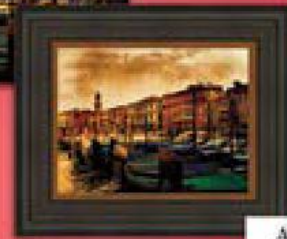
Of course, if you're the adventurous type with a penchant for standing out, quartz can be made in nearly any colour you can imagine. Shades of reds, blues and oranges are available if you're daring enough to undertake them.

That's not to say white is boring. Martin says home owners are adding variation to spaces, doing counters in one colour, then adding a feature piece, like a back splash ➤

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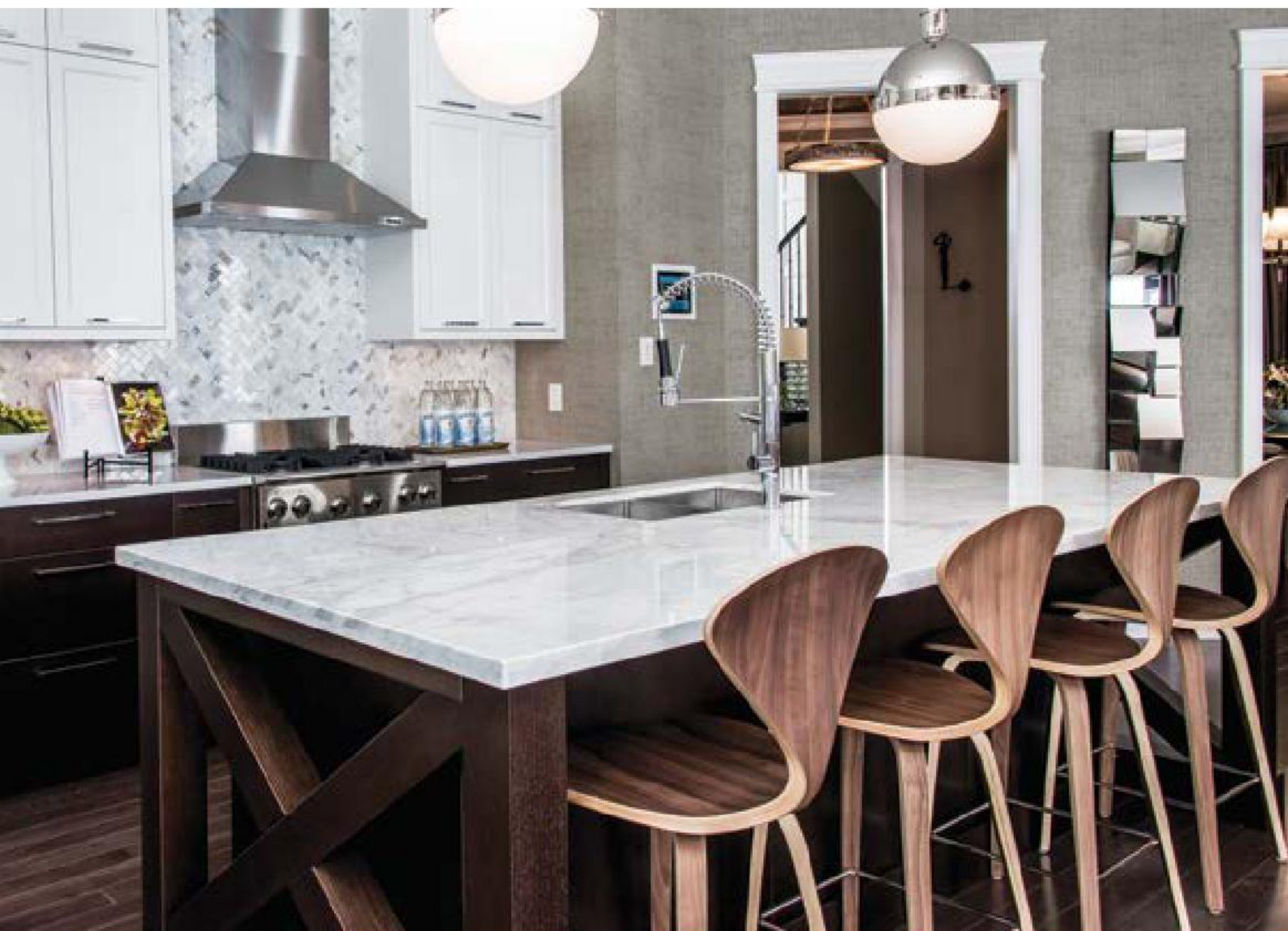


Photo: Elaine Mark-D&M Images

THE COST OF NEW COUNTERTOPS

A number of different materials are available for countertops at a range of prices, and cost can vary dramatically even within one type of product because different brands and finishes affect the final price. This list is just a rough estimate for comparison purposes.

Material	Price range per square foot
Laminate	\$20-\$40
Tile (ceramic and porcelain)	\$20-\$40
Granite	\$60-\$200
Quartz	\$70-\$120
Solid surface (Corian)	\$60-\$120
Marble	\$75-\$200
Concrete	\$80-\$120

in another complimentary shade or colour. Installing show pieces, like a marble island for those whose lifestyle permits it, with a more subtle white perimeter around it, is a fantastic exclamation point.

Watch Out for Waterfalls

Solid surfaces are finding their way into new areas. Stone is climbing up as a full height backsplash or fireplace wall, and spilling off the counters to create “waterfalls” where the material continues over the edge to reach the floor. Found more often in modern-style

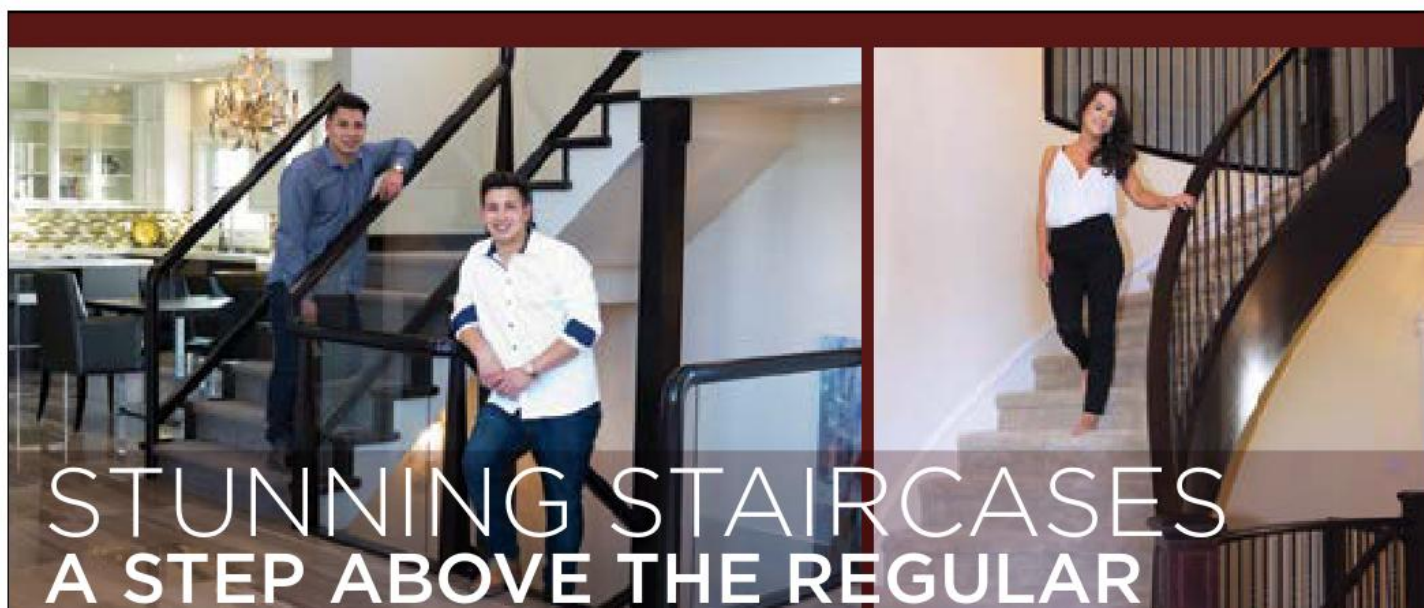
homes, the waterfall countertop edge is an exciting new look, particularly in a kitchen island. Martin says it’s often requested, but people are surprised at the cost to create such a feature.

“It’s not necessarily a huge increase in material, but the labor involved is what creates this price increase. Often, the installers will do a mitered edge and they’ll seam it on the edge. You hide the seam and you hide the thickness to create this full effect. But, of course, this is a time intensive process to be done properly.” ➤



Other regions of Canada have seen a rise in detailed edge profiles. Saskatoon often favours the look of a clean, squared edge.

Photo: Elaine Mark-D&M Images



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Photo: Elaine Mark-D&M Images

Popular Profiles

In more traditional style homes, a detailed edge profile lends an extra layer of class. While this look seems to be popular in other regions, Martin says this is one trend that hasn't made it to Saskatchewan yet. The clean look of a squared edge is the most

preferred.

Double thick countertops are also on the rise, and with quartz coming down in price. It's a look that's becoming more affordable. A purely aesthetic choice, the double thick countertops ground a space and create a subtle intrigue with any design style.

Finding the right countertop is about finding the style that suits you, and there is an incredible range of materials beyond the ever-popular quartz and granite. Unusual materials like wooden butcher blocks, recycled glass products, soapstone and concrete are finding their way into the mix.

Due to high prices and the special care required, these materials will likely remain on the fringe. (i)

Ashleigh Mattern



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KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

HEATHER FRITZ

THE ART OF ENTERTAINING

Saskatoon Author Shares His Secrets

Anthony Bidulka is a Saskatoon local, and the creative force behind two series featuring Private Detective Russell Quant and Disaster

Recovery Agent Adam Saint. Like his protagonists, Anthony "loves to travel, meet people, sample food and wine, walk sun-drenched streets, being

awed by the world." Saskatoon HOME, awed by Anthony's renowned multiple Christmas trees and flair for entertaining, reached him in Naples (yes,

Napoli) to chat about what makes for a memorable party. Now we're waiting for our invitation to his next soirée!

So which is it, do you love



Anthony is a self-described "Christmas-tree-oholic." Much of his holiday décor draws on colours in his stunning art collection.



decorating or do you love entertaining?

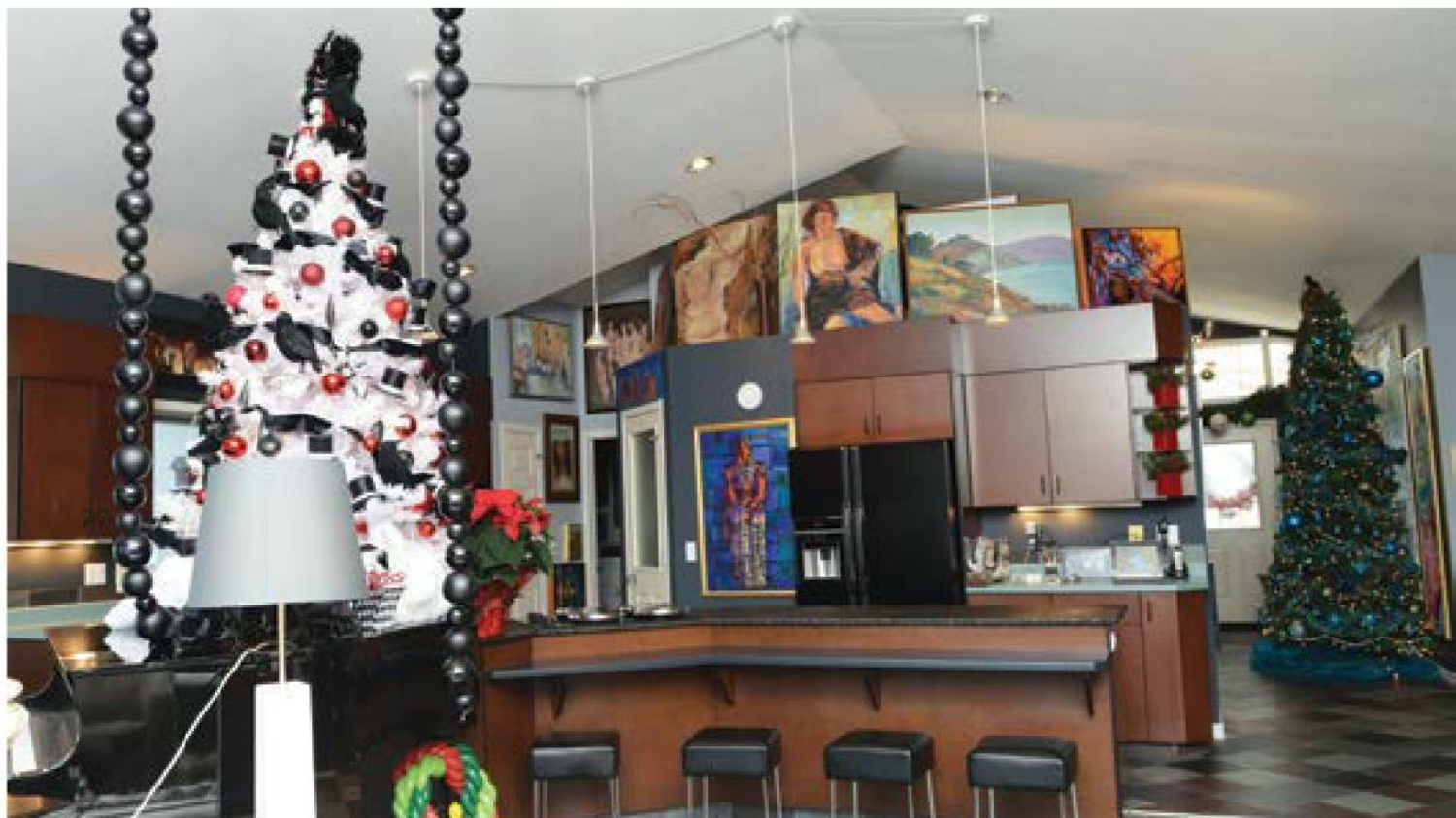
I love doing both, but it's interesting to consider the tie between the two. Can

I decorate without entertaining? Absolutely. Whether it's Christmas trees or art, decorating is a labour of love for me. Can I entertain

without decorating? That too is a yes, but less resoundingly. If tossing some autumn leaves or dried flowers petals from the back yard on the table

for a dinner with friends is decorating, then yes, I like a table with some pizzazz.

Some people find throwing a party exhausting. ➤



How do you avoid getting grumpy?

The key is being very clear with myself about what the goal of the event is. Rarely will the answer be: I want to ignore my guests, be dead-tired before it even starts, or prove to myself why I never want to throw a party ever again. Be honest with yourself about what you do well, what you do poorly and what triggers stress or enjoyment.

For us, cooking often did us

in. Both of us can cook well, but neither one of us are what I would call an at-ease cook. We'd disappear into the kitchen for long stretches, and come back looking and feeling like we'd just run a marathon. The first time we hired a caterer and spent the evening simply enjoying our guests was a new beginning to our entertaining lives.

Do you love theme parties?

What's your favourite holiday?

I am Christmas-tree-oholic. And I do love a good themed

event. For a decade in the '90s, we threw a series of elaborate theme parties. It began with a simple Christmas tree decorating party which developed into more complicated and larger parties, including a murder mystery I wrote (foreshadowing of what would become my career some years later, I guess). There was a faux Olympics where guests came as delegates from made-up countries and competed in events like wine tasting and wind-up toy

races. A Halloween Road Rally sent our guests on a Saskatoon-wide scavenger hunt.

How can you create a memorable occasion, even on a skimpy budget?

With a little creativity, parties don't need to be expensive. We hosted a series of New Year's Eve parties and asked each guest to bring their favourite comfort food to share. The invitation included a series of questions about movies. The guests were asked to come

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prepared to show a clip to illustrate their answer. Not only did the evening cost little, it was a great way to get to know our guests in a personal way.

Do you prefer sit-down meals or finger food style appetizers?

I like both equally well. As long as the event is well planned, it's going to be a winner. We have a collection of old standby dishes that we pull out when we cook. We'll

try out something new only if we've tried it out on ourselves first. A very-lemon chicken dish experience taught us that lesson. Those poor guests, I'm sure they still have a pucker on their faces.

What about mixing in pets and kids? What if you've got a spouse or partner who simply dislikes social events?

Honesty and direct, candid communication explaining expectations with your guests is the best bet. Unless you are

TONY'S TOP DO'S AND DON'TS

Do plan. Unless you're having beers and burgers on the barbecue with your best pals, give the event some thought. Details are important. Contingency plans can be lifesavers.

Do invite early. People are busy. I usually extend invitations a minimum of a month ahead.

Do be specific. Nothing puts people more at ease than knowing what's what. Is it t-shirt and shorts, or is it fancy dress? Is it just you and us, or are there going to be 30 people? Do I come hungry or should I eat first?

Do send reminders. I'll usually send a quick e-mail a few days before, highlighting the important details.

Do accept failure. When things don't go well, don't swear off entertaining. It happens. Try again.

Don't be the star of your own party. As host, accept a certain level of responsibility to ensure your guests enjoy themselves. This does not mean you should take over the conversation or pull out the home movies.

Don't be afraid to cancel. We have canceled pool parties on rainy days. We've canceled a dinner party if one of us is too ill. If a key ingredient to the goal of the party is suddenly missing, cancel.

Do be well rested. Having a work-free restful evening the night before does wonders to help you focus.

Do 'be in the moment' by the time the doorbell rings. Then let go and have a party.

inviting mind readers, details need to be made clear.

As far as spouses, what's a party without the person you love to share in it? But, if they

hate parties and would truly rather be elsewhere, sounds like a good solution to me.

Hopefully fistfights are few and far between. ➤

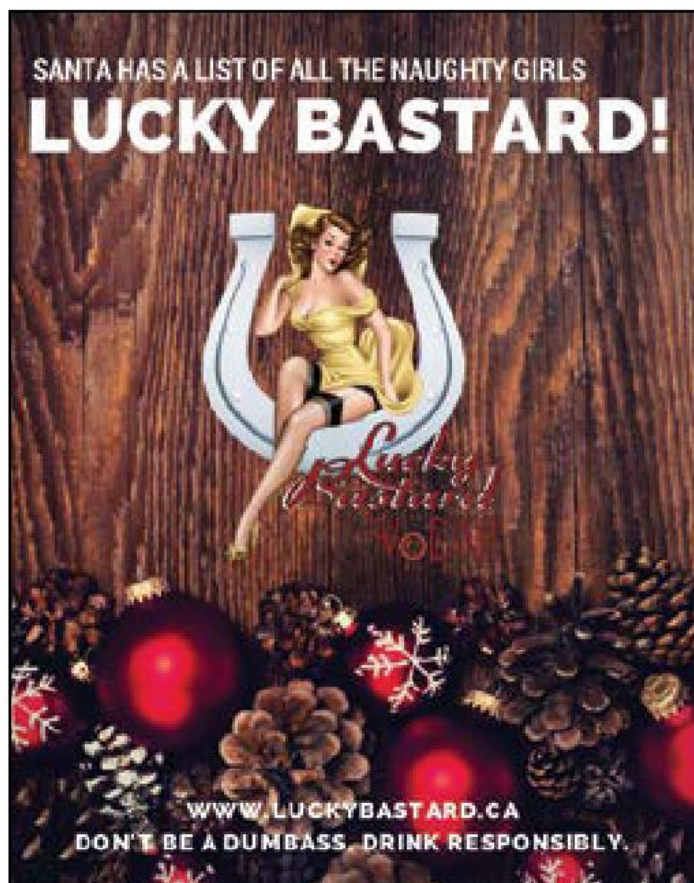
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How do you avoid potentially awkward situations?

For our larger events where there may be 100 to 200 people, I leave it up to our guests. For smaller events, I send an email that makes it clear who the other guests will be. If someone is at odds with another guest, they can bow out graciously if necessary.

How about cleanup afterwards? Do you stay up to get everything done, or can it wait?

Our only rule is that candles are blown out and perishable food put away. We've done everything from lock-the-door-and-hit-the-sack to major clean up. Oddly, it's the one part I don't plan. My favourite is when we have a nightcap, nibble on whatever leftovers we can scavenge and chat about the event.

Any other advice?

If there is anything I have that resembles a motto, it's "life is short, so make it wide." There's no better feeling than having thrown a successful party, been generous with friends or family, met new people, learned more about someone you thought you knew well, or simply had a great meal or an evening of laughing until you cry.

Sometimes we throw a bit much at our guests. With few exceptions, they've always blown me away with their flexibility, generosity of spirit and good-natured attitudes. For me as a host, the best thing a guest can do is show up with a big smile and good attitude. 

Karin Melberg Schwier

HOLIDAY PARTY THEMES

Thank you to Karen Turner of Turner Event Management for some wonderful theme ideas for your next party.

Deck the Halls—House Decorating or Tree Trimming Party—All will love to join in the festive spirit and deck the halls with merriment. You can have most of the decorations complete, and have folks help out with the final touches, or have guests make their own ornaments to take home.

Caroling Party—When was the last time people came by your house to sing carols? Start the tradition this year, and your whole neighbourhood will remember. After caroling, head back inside for warm treats and hot cocoa.

Frosty the Snowman Party—Decorate a snowman, watch the old holiday show, or make snowman as part of craft activity.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer Party—Who wouldn't want to come to a party and play reindeer games? All will love this party based on the nostalgic TV show.

Joy to the World/Peace on Earth Party—Peace symbols abound, this holiday party will celebrate peace on earth and good will towards all. It could even be a party where gifts are brought, then donated to a charity.

Holiday Cocktail Party—Egg Nog, Spiced Rum and a Hot Toddy too... Get out the martini glasses and cocktail recipe book and have an '50s style Holiday Cocktail party with all the traditional standbys, and new concoctions too.

Messiah/Classical Holiday Music Party—Set an elegant buffet, play the beautiful classical music and enjoy the holiday season with friends and family.

Cookie Exchange Party - Nothing says holidays like glorious desserts and cookies. You bring a dozen cookies and leave with much more! A delicious holiday tradition.

Sledding Party—If you live in snow country, gather friends and family at the local hill, set up some hot cocoa and treats and have a fun sledding party to celebrate the holiday season.

Tacky Christmas Outfit Party—Pull out that tacky holiday sweater and tie, and head over for some retro 1950s hors d'oeuvres and laughs at this Tacky Christmas party. Make sure to bring the polaroid for some classic party shots!

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 CRAIG SILLIPHANT

 HEATHER FRITZ

There are a few things that instantly conjure up the Christmas spirit in your mind: seeing snow on the ground, hearing that first carol in the mall and the house filling with the aroma of Christmas baking.

When I was growing up, Christmas time meant a sudden bounty of food and treats that would leave you full until New Year's Day. There were all kinds of candy and

nuts to graze on before the big meals, but the thing that always stood out the most to me was my Mom's Christmas baking. So today, for those of you who get ready for the holidays in your own homes, with your own families, we bring you two simple, but treasured recipes. These Christmas treats can turn Scrooge into Santa: butter tarts and sugar cookies. When you smell those things

baking in the oven, you know that it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

When I was younger, I was more the food tester as opposed to the guy doing any of the baking, and while I consider myself a decent cook, baking has never been part of my repertoire. But now that I have a young son, I figure it's time I learned how to bake some of my favourite

Christmas treats to share with him. Who better to indoctrinate me into the world of Christmas baking than my own mother, Karen Silliphant, the lovely lady who brought me into this world, and then filled it—and me—with delicious baking?

"I bake more at Christmas," says Mom. "It's a special time. You get together with family and friends. You cook more. You eat more."



Craig with his son Luke.

Mom came over to my house with some of her secret recipes to hand down. First, we got to work on making a batch of butter tarts.

In certain circles, I've been referred to as the butter tart vampire. I skulk in dark hallways, led by my nose towards the kitchen, hissing at the light and baring fangs, reaching out with gnarled fingers to grasp tarts cooling on the counter.

You see, I can't resist the lure of those delectable treats, the flaky crust and brown sugary, raisin-filled goodness. You bite into one, your eyes roll back into your head dramatically and you are satisfied with the world. Until it's gone, that is. Then the monster flares again—it's hard to eat just one. Unlike the dry, flavourless store-bought butter tarts, my Mom's are big and bursting with sweet, gooey filling.

"I'm not a fan of the store bought butter tarts," says Mom, with more than a hint of disdain. "They look too perfect. Like they're made by machines."

Strangely enough, butter tarts are considered one of the few recipes that actually originated in Canada, though no one can exactly pinpoint the where and how of the first one. A common dessert in pioneer cooking, they were one of the first recorded recipes in The Women's Auxiliary of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Ontario in 1900. I like the idea that this isn't just a family tradition in our house, but that people have been enjoying them as far back as settler times.

Mom often makes her butter tarts earlier in the year so they're instantly ready for Christmas, making it easier to focus on other things like ➤

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family and Christmas dinner itself when the big day comes. She puts them in ice cream pails and hides them in the deep freeze in the basement. However, the basement rec room is the primary lair for the butter tart vampire, and

as a teenage boy, my friends and I would raid the deep freeze, leaving my Mom to find just crumbs in buckets by December.

"I stuck them outside in the barbecue for the winter after that so you and your friends

wouldn't find them," she says, as she starts to make the pastry. "But that only worked for one year."

The pastry is part of the secret; my Mom uses a recipe that she got from her step-mother that she calls 'Vera's

Never Fail Pie Crust.' She takes 5 cups of flour and mixes in baking soda, sugar and salt. Then she adds a pound of lard (yes) and crumbles the mixture. In a measuring cup, she takes a slightly beaten egg and adds the vinegar and water to make

VERA'S NEVER FAIL PASTRY DOUGH



- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 5 cups flour | 1 pound lard |
| 1 tsp. baking powder | 1 egg |
| 1 tbsp. sugar | 1 tbsp. vinegar |
| 1 tbsp. salt | water |

Add lard into the flour mixture (the first four ingredients listed above) and crumble. In a measuring cup, add egg (beaten slightly with fork), vinegar and water to make 1 cup of liquid. Add flour and lard mixture and make into pastry. This dough can be frozen for later use.

MA SILLIPHANT'S BUTTER TARTS



- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup seedless raisins
- 1/3 cup melted unsalted butter
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- Walnuts, pecans optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut prepared pastry dough into circles and line muffin tin. Combine tart ingredients and spoon into pan, filling each about 2/3 full. Above recipe fills a dozen tart shells. Bake for 25 minutes.



a cup of liquid. Adding it to the flour and lard, she creates the pastry. This mixture will make 4 dozen pastry circles that are each 4 inches across.

After this, she cuts the dough into circles and places them in the tart pans. Here's

another tip: Mom actually uses muffin tins instead of a tart tin, because you get a bit more depth, meaning a plumper tart.

At this point, Mom preheats the oven to 350 degrees and pulls out the same big green Tupperware mixing bowl she's

had since I was a kid. I wonder how many butter tarts have been prepared using that bowl since the '70s? Into the bowl goes brown sugar, raisins, melted, unsalted butter, one egg and a teaspoon of vanilla (some recipes use walnuts, pecans and other ingredients; if you like a pecan in your butter tart, you can certainly add it in).

She mixes it together and then spoons it into the pastry-lined tins, filling each about 2/3 full. I wouldn't even use a mixer; do it by hand because over mixing can create air bubbles. This will make about a dozen tarts, but you can make more by doubling or tripling the ingredient amounts. Truth be told, this recipe isn't really a family secret.

"I actually found it in a cookbook a long time ago," Mom explains, "then I added and removed things over the years."

We bake the tarts for 25 minutes, pulling them out to cool. Slide a paring knife around the sides of each tin once it's at room temperature so they don't stick. At that point, my young son Luke wanders into the kitchen to see what we're up to. Perfect timing for him to get his first taste of Grandma's butter tarts. His eyes roll back; we've created

another in a long line of butter tart vampires, no doubt.

After this, we make sugar cookies, just a small part of the caloric spread we'll be enjoying over the Yuletide season.

This Christmas, we'll gather around the tree, seeing things through Luke's eyes; he's just old enough to start comprehending the magic of the season. He'll see the bright lights of the Christmas tree and get into ripping open the colourful presents (though at this age, the boxes are often as exciting as the gifts themselves). More importantly, he'll see family gathered around, eating, drinking, laughing. And of course, eating those butter tarts and sugar cookies, lovingly made with family in mind. 

Craig Silliphant

MA SILLIPHANT'S SUGAR COOKIES



2 cups white sugar
1 pound butter
4 large eggs
5 cups flour

2 tsp. baking soda
4 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. nutmeg

Cream butter and sugar. Add well beaten eggs. Add remaining ingredients. Roll ¼" thick. Use cookie cutters for desired shapes (hint: we make these at Halloween and other holidays as well—all you do is change the Christmas tree to a pumpkin shape and you're in business). Decorate with icing or sprinkles. Bake at 350 degrees for 6 to 8 minutes.

HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

SASKATOON IN THE AGE OF CIVIL DEFENSE



Saskatoon Civil Defence rescue vehicle and equipment, ca. 1960.

Photo: Courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

The Atomic Age began on August 6, 1945, at 8:15 am, when the city of Hiroshima, Japan, was obliterated by a single bomb, dropped from an American aircraft. That attack, and a subsequent one on the city of Nagasaki a few days later, effectively ended the Second World War. With the end of the war, the uneasy alliance between east and west began to unravel. In 1949, the Soviet Union got its own atomic bomb and the race was on. But what we call the "Cold War" began right here in Canada, one day in the fall of 1945, when a Soviet Embassy clerk in Ottawa named Igor Gouzenko defected with a briefcase full of secret documents detailing Soviet espionage activities in the west. For the next 40 years, the great powers faced off in a precarious game of brinkmanship that saw civilization itself hover

Mushroom cloud from a US atomic bomb test at the Bikini Atoll in 1946.



Photo: US National Archives photo no. 6234446

It wasn't Communism that bothered people so much as the thought of nuclear annihilation.

on the edge of destruction.

In Saskatoon, the Cold War was never distant from the public imagination, even if the events were mostly half a world away. Canada in ➤

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Scale model of a fallout shelter like the one built in Dennis Fusedale's basement in 1961.



Photo: Courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

the 1950s was still a country at war, our soldiers guarding western Europe from the threat of Soviet invasion and fighting with the UN in Korea. The wave of anti-communist sentiment that gripped America during the 1950s was more muted here, but it was still news, even in Saskatoon, where international tensions routinely made for front page headlines and fearful editorials.

It wasn't Communism that bothered people so much as the thought of nuclear annihilation. Nothing focuses the attention quite so quickly as the image of a mushroom cloud. While Saskatoon was not considered a likely target for attack, people hereabouts were quick to point out that if the Americans and the Russians did start throwing missiles at each other, they were probably going to meet here, right smack in the middle. So Saskatoon, like other cities, established a civil defence authority, and people we talked to recalled practicing "duck and cover" drills in schools here, just as they did in the US, in preparation for a nuclear attack.

Initially, civil defense plans were predicated on the idea that any attack would involve fleets of enemy bombers coming over the North Pole. Early detection of such an attack would give several hours warning, potentially enough time to evacuate the target cities. Hence, "Operation Life-saver," a massive drill staged by the city of Calgary in 1955. It meant 40,000 people from the city's north east suburbs were to be evacuated—some by bus, but mostly in their own cars—to refugee stations in small towns nearby, out of danger. At 10:50 a.m. on September 28, air raid sirens began to wail and radio stations broadcast the chilling news: radar had

Saskatoon teens dancing for the cameras on the CFQC-TV production, "Teens on TV", ca. 1959.



Photo: Saskatoon Public Library – Local History QC-1081-1

detected a flight of enemy bombers inbound and residents had only two-and-a-half hours to evacuate. Children were sent home from schools, businesses shut their doors and people packed a bag with food and clothes before taking their designated evacuation routes out of town. Or at any rate, that's how it was supposed to happen. In the end, most people avoided the whole thing. Some simply stayed home. Only 6,000 people actually participated, and whether the test was a qualified success or a complete failure depended on who you talked to.

While Saskatoon never staged a similar drill, we did have an active civil defense establishment. By 1960, we had more than 500 fully trained and enrolled members as well as a truly awesome rescue

van, purchased by the city for the princely sum of \$8,000. Auxiliary police forces were also trained under the civil defence umbrella, with 53 active members here by the end of 1960.

By 1959, Saskatoon had installed six air raid sirens to warn of impending attack. But by then, advances in missile technology meant that cities might have at most 15 minutes warning, not several hours. Pre-attack evacuation was clearly no longer feasible, if it ever had been, and defense planning guidelines circulated by the federal government in 1961 suggested that the only possible warning to people in the target cities would be to simply find shelter wherever they could. Evacuation appears actually to have been discouraged, on the grounds that fallout from an ➤

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Canadian army recruiting poster.



Photo: Saskatoon Star Phoenix, May 5, 1954

Air raid siren on the roof of Haultain School, 1966.



Photo: Saskatoon Public Library – Local History Room - QC-1979-1

Cover of a 1953 City of Saskatoon civil defense pamphlet.

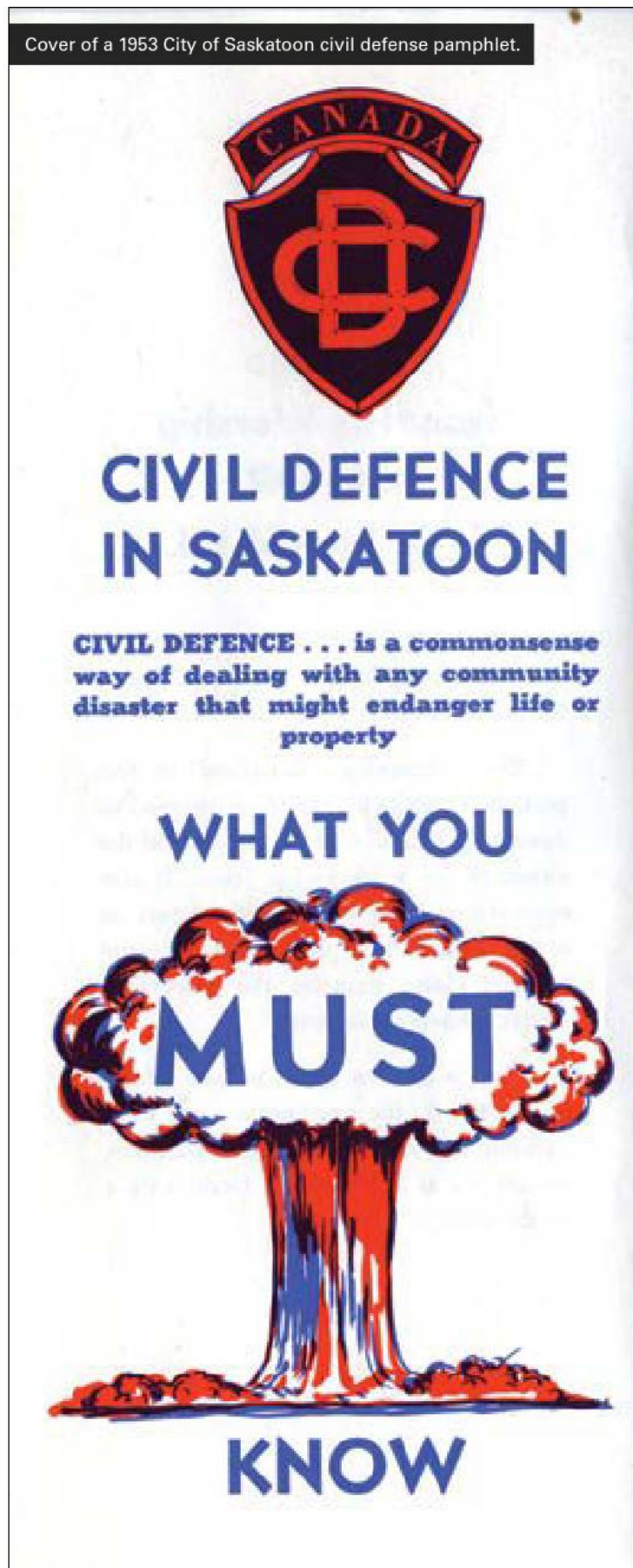


Photo: Courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

Civil defense training exercise.



Photo: Courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

attack could drift anywhere, and evacuating might simply mean leaving an unaffected area and entering one with high radiation levels. By 1961, therefore, the emphasis was on ensuring the continuation of government, aiding survivors after an attack and dealing with radioactive fallout.

This included the building of

home fallout shelters. About this time, the city acquired a large, scale model of a basement fallout shelter for display and training. Constructed of cindercrete blocks, with bunks and shelves for food, water and other supplies, these shelters also included a small toilet area around the corner, and came with curtained-off

doorways to protect against radioactive fallout. In 1961, Dennis Fusedale, the Director of Civil Defense in Saskatoon, actually had one built in his basement. Only photographs of that shelter now exist, and while a local contractor claimed to have had orders for more, there is no evidence any others were built here.

Of course, fallout shelters are not the same as bomb shelters. People did build bomb shelters (maybe not in Saskatoon) to try and ride out a direct attack, and, of course, even without a shelter, the basement was always a good place to be in the event of a near miss. But, as a 1953 City of Saskatoon pamphlet on ➤

Two shots of the fallout shelter in the basement of Dennis Fusedale's house, 1961.

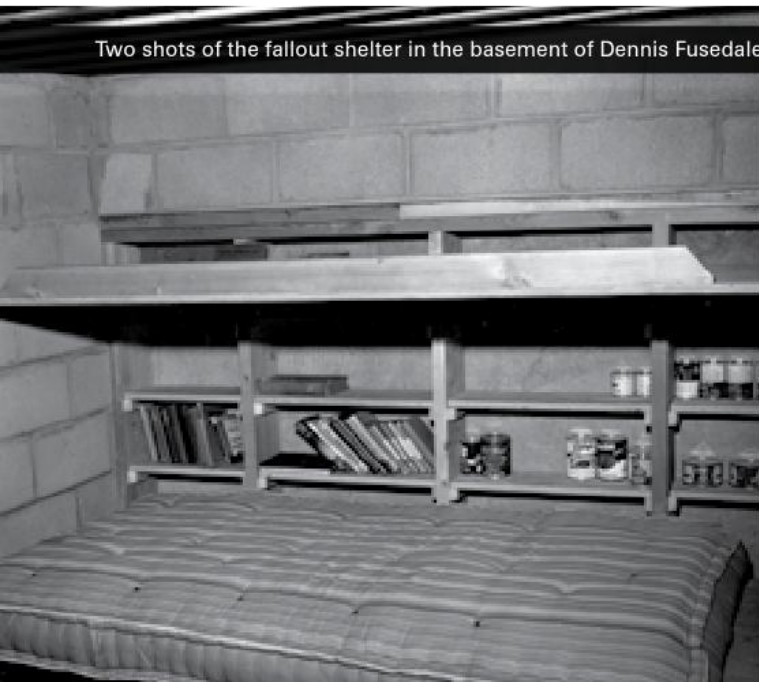


Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - QC-1948-1



Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - QC-1948-2

EMMA WOIKIN: SASKATOON'S UNLIKELY SPY

A Russian Doukhobor from Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan, Emma Woikin worked as a cipher clerk for the federal government in Ottawa during the war, handling secret messages to and from the British. She was recruited by the Russians to spy for them, passing on the contents of the messages she handled. Following the defection of Victor Gouzenko in 1945, she was arrested on charges of espionage and was sentenced to three years in prison. After her release, she moved to Saskatoon where she worked for a law firm. She died in 1969.




Photo: Saskatoon Public Library
- Local History Room - PH-98-113-1

the subject noted, "If a bomb of the type possible today were to burst over the centre of this city, Saskatoon would virtually disappear." Comforting words indeed.

How did people here feel about the possibility of nuclear war? It depends on who you talked to. Some were terrified, others unconcerned. "People were afraid," remembers one long-time Saskatoon resident, adding: "It was a very scary time." Some remember their families laying in stocks of tinned food and other supplies, "just in case" as they planned to simply to hide in the basement and hope for the best. For others, the Cold War was an irrelevant abstraction.

But the 1950s and '60s were also a time of incredible change here in Saskatoon, and for the most part, we revelled in them, Cold War or not. The city's population doubled, and Saskatoon burst its boundaries, gobbling up great tracts of the surrounding countryside. In the 1950s, we experienced the biggest building boom since

1912. Enrollment at the U of S nearly tripled, and innovations came thick and fast. In 1953, clean, cheap and efficient natural gas heating came to Saskatoon. Television got here the following year, and by the end of the decade, most homes had a TV set. Rock and roll music, that mainstay of popular culture, was as big here as it was anywhere else, and local teens danced for the television audience on the set of *Teens on TV* down at the studios of CFQC. In the 1950s and '60s, Saskatoon finally shook off the dust of the Dirty Thirties and put aside the horrors of the Second World War. Regardless of the precarious nature of the world around them, people here were determined to embrace the future, whatever it might bring. 

Jeff O'Brien



✎ LÉO JOSEPH

📷 LILLIAN LANE

WINTER ORGANIZATION

Tips to Minimize the Clutter

As the snow rolls in and days shorten, we get ready for winter. Your perfect world may involve bunkering down inside your home for the entire

season with Amazon Drones delivering you pizzas as you binge watch *Game of Thrones* on Netflix. Yes, Ned Stark, "Winter is coming." But life in

Saskatoon marches on through winter and you still must get to work, and get the kids off to school and hockey practice. Getting prepared to get out

the door can be a daunting task, so here are some tips to help you keep your winter routine organized.





A truly unique Canadian problem. "How do I store my hockey sticks?" A repurposed pallet may be the answer.

Put On Your Sorting Hat

Unless you have aspirations of appearing on *Hoarders*, your closet should be seasonally reviewed and renewed. Go through your jackets and bunny hugs, and decide if they really have a place in your life anymore. I'm not suggesting you throw away your 1989 Iron Maiden jean jacket, but the front closet may not be the best place for it.

Move your fall and summer coats to your storage room or under your bed. Make sure you only have the winter jackets you will be wearing this year in the closet. If you have any extra coats that have been outgrown or are no longer your style, donate them to the Rock 102 Coats for Kids campaign or some other worthy charity.

If You Build It, They Will Organize

Review the space you have in your front entry way and closet. Your home may have come with an old fashioned single horizontal bar but unless you are in some sort of Sheldon Cooper roommate agreement, you don't have to live with it forever. Consider adding shelves with bins for various items. Compartmentalize the space to keep it organized.

If you have kids adding to your chaos, assign them specific bins and spots for

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Keep the little ones in mind with their own 'at the right height' hooks. TIP: Using a multi hook system, rather than a single hook, will provide more durability and is less likely to be pulled out of the wall with pressure being spread out more evenly on the back plate.



Baskets or bins for each member of the family keep items like mitts and toques organized. Moving jackets meant to be used in other seasons to a spare bedroom closet or another less used area of the house also eliminates a lot of clutter.

their coats. This makes it easy to locate them when you are rushing them out of the house to catch the bus. It can also prevent arguments such as "Nicky's jacket is touching mine!" And if you are adding hooks and bins, keep the little ones in mind, and install them according to their height. Then they're no longer part of the problem, but rather active helpers in being organized.

It's Not Just a Car Hold


They may be an eyesore and take away from your curb appeal, but we Saskatoonians love our attached garages. The ability to go directly from the home to your car, drive to the mall and park underground is almost like having a teleporter; you need not even breathe the cold air to get from point A to point B. As in any real estate, location is key, and the space

just outside your garage to house door is prime. Don't treat it like Saskatoon's ParcelY and leave it undeveloped and underused, utilize it! Install shelves, buckets or pegboards. It's in the garage so it does not need to be pretty; even a repurposed pallet can create a place to put the hockey sticks.


Wet Doesn't Need to Be Wild

Quick physics lesson: when snow melts it turns to water and you end up with soaking boots, mitts and toques. This may seem like a no brainer but leaving these items piled on the floor means they won't dry very well. Dust off that wallet and buy a boot drying rack. Inexpensive but a must-have for every home in Saskatoon.

And what's a Saskatoon winter without hockey? Hockey parents will know that putting wet, cold gear on your ➤



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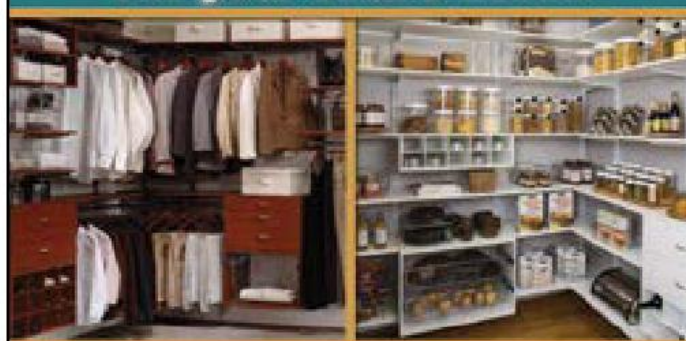
The drying rack. An essential part of life in Saskatoon.



kids is not a great experience. Worth the investment, there are full hockey gear drying trees to help air out the gear. Alternatively, if you have the space, just spread everything out in a closed room with a dehumidifier. This removes the wet and even helps with the smell. Everyone's nose will thank you all season long. 🧢

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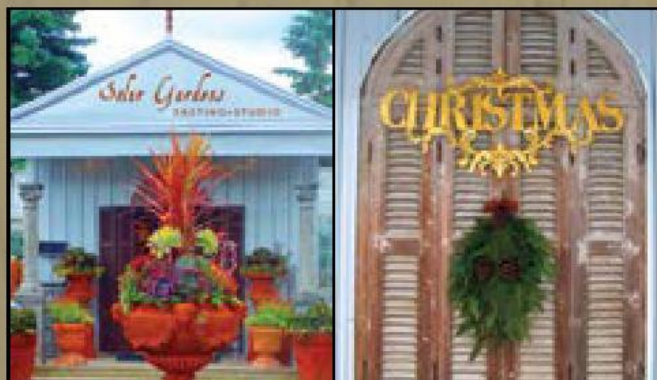


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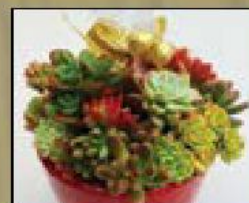
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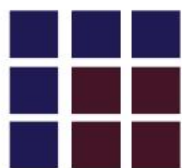
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